

Land Marks

Celebration of 1,000 Properties Protected Forever

In October, more than 125 guests joined the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) in a celebration of 1,000 conservation easements on more than 122,000 acres of forest, farmland and scenic open space across the state of Maryland. The milestone event was held at historic Holly Hill in southern Anne Arundel County.

Keynote speaker Rand Wentworth, President of the Land Trust Alliance, acknowledged MET's tremendous accomplishment and its leadership role in the land conservation movement in Maryland. He also thanked landowners who had donated conservation easements on their properties to protect them from sprawl and development. Wentworth indicated that MET ranks as one of the largest land trusts in the country, comparing its success to the Nature Conservancy, a conservation organization which holds over 1,000 easements nationwide.

Special guests included Comptroller Peter Franchot, who praised the foresight of William S. James, President

of the Maryland Senate (1963–1974) and author of 1967 legislation that created MET. Other presenters included, Speaker of the House of Delegates Michael Busch and John Griffin, Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, who remarked on the important role MET plays in land protection in Maryland.

Guests enjoyed locally grown food, wine and local seafood, and music by the Annapolis Bluegrass Coalition, plus a rare opportunity to tour the house and gardens at Holly Hill. Originally named Holland Hills, Holly Hill was built between 1698 and 1733 and is one of the largest and best preserved examples of the Medieval Transitional style of architecture in Maryland. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Special thanks to the Clagett Family for agreeing to host this special event. The Clagett's recently donated a conservation easement to MET, which permanently protects the 255-acre farm.



Harford Land Trust representatives Harry Webster, President (left), Peg Niland, Director (right), and MET Board Chair, King Burnett (center).



Event attendees had the rare opportunity to tour the house and gardens at historic Holly Hill.



State Comptroller Peter Franchot and MET Board Chair K. King Burnett.

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Director's Note *by Elizabeth Buxton, MET Director*



Despite the global economic downturn, 2009 was a record year for the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET). We are proud to report that 24 easements totaling 5,747 acres were negotiated by MET. These easements, located within 11 counties across Maryland, represent the State's most cost effective land conservation program and a perpetual commitment to protect farmland, forests and scenic open space. Since 1972, MET has successfully worked with landowners across the state to help conserve their lands, primarily through donated conservation easements. To date, MET, in partnership with 52 local land trusts, has permanently protected over 125,000 acres on more than 1,000 properties statewide.

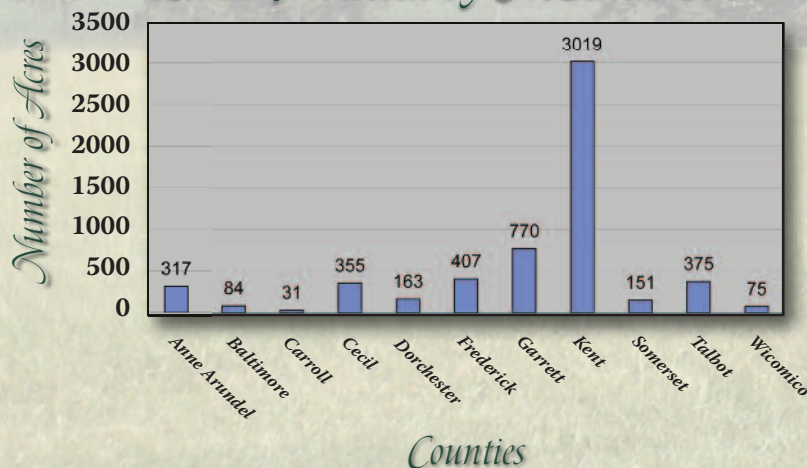
With support from both the state and private donations, MET offers an economical land conservation program that protects landscapes and natural resources for approximately \$70 per acre. Securing easements, however, represents just the first step. MET ensures ongoing stewardship of its conserved land by routinely inspecting easement properties and assisting land owners with the issues they face as they continue to use their land after placing it under protection. MET stewardship staff, together with local land trusts and more than 25 trained volunteers, monitor easement properties to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of each easement. Long-term stewardship is MET's most serious responsibility as easement properties age and change hands.

The easements will protect some of Maryland's most pristine forests, farms, and wetlands and will help to restore the Chesapeake Bay. While easements protect the scenic and cultural value of open space, forests and wildlife habitat, they will also help restore the Chesapeake Bay by preserving large blocks of land that can filter nutrients from water as it drains toward the Bay. 95% of Maryland flows into the Chesapeake Bay, so every acre protected by conservation easements directly aids in the ongoing restoration efforts on the Bay.

The conservation easement properties acquired in 2009 are as varied as the state itself. One of the 24 properties includes 355 acres of prime farmland located on the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway in Cecil County. The easement, which protects Browning Creek, a Bay tributary, was purchased with federal transportation dollars. Browning Creek Farm is the fourth property owned by Charlotte and Jack Loller that has been protected from development in perpetuity.

(continued on next page)

Land Protected by MET in 2009





Another 2009 conserved property (pictured, background) includes a 188-acre property in Frederick County that encompasses nearly 90 acres of the Cunningham Falls Ecologically Sensitive Area. This land provides

critical sanctuary for a state endangered plant, the Queen-of-the-Prairie (*Filipendula rubra*), shown here, which is currently found nowhere else in Maryland. The plant grows in an unusual spring-fed wetland meadow found on the property that was purchased in sections over the years by Peter Fedak and his late wife, Susan. Fedak first came to know and love the Catocin Mountain area when he visited Camp David while working in the military at the White House under President Eisenhower in the 1950s.

Andelot Farm in Kent County (pictured, front cover) was the largest easement of 2009 protecting 2,894 acres including approximately 1,087 acres of forest, 1,692 acres of farmland and

50 acres of freshwater ponds. This easement is co-held with the Eastern Shore Land conservancy, one of our partner land trusts.

Dr. Micheal Pistole and Richard Bradshaw protected 61 acres of their Hidden View Farm in Anne Arundel County. The easement aims to preserve the property's ecological functions and natural features, which include regionally important bird habitat, a 450-year-old white oak tree, and stunning views of Bacon Ridge Branch and the South River. Hidden View Farm forms part of a greater conservation initiative in the area known as the South River Greenway which encompasses four watersheds that drain into the South River, and over 10,000 acres of undeveloped forest. A growing portion of the Greenway is publicly-owned parkland, and though Hidden View Farm will not be open to the public, it provides an essential wildlife corridor in the Greenway's ecosystem.

2009 was a record year for MET and the local land trust community. With the help of committed landowners with long-term vision and the desire to leave a legacy for their community, MET can continue to successfully and cost effectively preserve Maryland's treasured landscapes.



MET's Stewardship Program



MET's "Protected Forever" sign lets neighbors and passers-by know of your preserved legacy for future generations. If you would like a sign for your property, please contact MET.

The goal of MET's Stewardship Program is to work with landowners to ensure the terms of the easement are upheld for the long term. We accomplish this by building a good relationship with the current and future owners of the conserved land and helping them understand the conservation easement and the conservation values on the property. MET encourages questions from landowners and invites them to become good stewards of the land. Landowners are often the best ambassadors for MET and land conservation.

If your easement is also held with a partner land trust with a local contact, you should contact them first. Contact information for local land trusts is listed on the MET website: www.dnr.state.md.us/met.

MONITORING VISITS

Responsible stewardship requires regular visits to easement property by MET staff and/or volunteers, or a representative from one of our partner land trusts. We can meet with you and walk the property to observe whether the terms of the conservation easement are being met. Prior notice and arrangement of a mutually convenient time is our regular practice. The monitoring visit includes reviewing and discussing the terms of the easement and current management, walking the property and documenting the existing conditions with photographs. MET staff will inform you of any concerns and work with you to address specific questions or concerns.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCED CONSERVATION AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

We welcome your inquiries regarding Enhanced Conservation and Best Management Practices and can provide information from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the University of Maryland-Extension Service and other partner agencies. Advice can be provided on conservation practices, wildlife management or best management practices.

CONTACTING US

Inquiries about your conservation easement should be directed to Joan Lally at 410-514-7915 or by email at jlally@dnr.state.ms.us. Please submit all requests for approval for proposed activities in writing and mail to MET, 100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD or submit via email.



2009 Maryland Land Trust Alliance Conference

MET hosted conservation professionals from over 50 land trusts and conservation organizations throughout the state at the Maryland Land Trust Alliance Conference on May 19, 2009 at the Patuxent Research Refuge National Wildlife Visitor Center in Laurel. Participants attended sessions on GIS mapping tools, the valuing of natural resources, conservation easement permanence issues, and environmental financing. Speakers included representatives from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Land Trust Alliance, national conservation organizations and insight from local land trusts.

The Conference Keynote Speaker was Ian J. Plant, a critically-acclaimed photographer of natural landscapes and wildlife. Many of Ian's photographs made emotional connections with the audience, showing the beauty of the Chesapeake Bay landscapes. Ian has travelled extensively in the Bay Watershed, exploring wild and forgotten places that many land trust members could recall from their personal experiences.

The Aileen Hughes Award for Leadership in Land Conservation was presented to Kate Patton, Executive Director of the Lower Shore Land Trust. LSLT works to protect the natural heritage, rural character, and historic landscapes of Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties, by assisting landowners to discover, evaluate, and implement any of the available land preservation options. The Aileen Hughes Award is given to an individual representing a MD land trust for leadership, partnership and innovation and honors the late Aileen Hughes, a leader in the conservation movement who was also a supporter of women's and civil rights. Ms. Patton has brought new perspectives to land conservation work for finding sources of funding, building capacity in a structured manner and working with community partners to involve land preservation in local community planning.

The Conference also honors commitments made by landowners to land preservation. *The Dillon Award for Outstanding Conservation Landowner* was presented to Dr. Anson Hines, Director of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) for the

preservation of the Contee Farm with a perpetual conservation easement. Dr. Hines was a major player in bringing the property under conservation easement. Dr. Hines forged partnerships with MET, the Scenic Rivers Land Trust, DNR, Anne Arundel County, SERC Board members and the original family to make this project successful.

The Award honors Alverta and Louise Dillon, sisters and retired school teachers, who donated a conservation easement and then bequeathed their Garrett County property to MET in 1984. Alverta and Louise were dedicated naturalists

and enthusiastic about conservation of the many resources found on their land. Their generous bequest is maintained as an endowment to support the activities and mission of the Trust, in accordance with the wishes of the Dillon family.

MET presented \$30,000 through Janice Hollmann Grants to seven land trusts to further her vision of strong and vibrant local land trusts. Janice helped found the Severn River Land Trust and Arundel Conservation Trust and also served on the Severn River Commission. Grants were awarded to:

The African American Land Trust
The American Chestnut Land Trust
Baltimore Green Space
Charm City Land Trusts
NeighborSpace of Baltimore County
The Lower Shore Land Trust.
The Manor Conservancy
The Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust



2009 Janice Hollmann Grants recipients (left to right): *Lower Shore Land Trust – Kate Patton; Baltimore Green Space – Miriam Avins; American Chestnut Land Trust – Karen Edgecombe; MET Presenter – Beki Howey; Charm City Land Trusts – Jim Kelly; Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust – Susan Charles; The Manor Conservancy – James W. Constable.*

The Bradshaw/Pistole easement (pictured, background) in Anne Arundel County protects the property's natural features along Bacon Ridge Branch and the South River.

SAVE THE DATE

2010 Maryland Land Trust Alliance Conference

Join your land conservation colleagues at the 2010 Maryland Land Trust Alliance Conference – our state-wide land conservation conference and training workshop.

Thursday, May 27th, 2010 • 8:30 am to 5:00pm

Pearlstone Retreat and Conference Center
5425 Mt. Gilead Road • Reisterstown, Maryland 21136

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Rand Wentworth, *President of the Land Trust Alliance*

Land trust staff, volunteers, board members, public agency staff, consultants and all those who care about farmland, forest and open space are invited and encouraged to attend.

Rooms are being held at the center at a special Conference rate for the night of Wednesday, May 26th.

Online registration will be announced soon and will be available at www.conservemd.org.

MET Welcomes New Board Members

The Maryland Environmental Trust welcomed Meredith Lathbury and Susan Duke Hance-Wells as its two newest board members in 2009. Both Meredith and Susan bring strong leadership skills and a wealth of experience in land conservation.



Meredith Lathbury is Director of Land Acquisition and Planning for the Department of Natural Resources. She returned to the Department after a ten year hiatus during which she served as Vice President of Conservation for the Potomac Conservancy (2000-2005) and Director of Land Protection for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (2006-2009). Ms. Lathbury has a law degree and masters in environmental

law from Vermont Law School. She lives with her husband in Cambridge, Maryland. She serves on the Board of Trustees as the Governor's representative.



Susan Duke Hance-Wells was born and raised on a farm in Calvert County, Maryland. She and her husband have three children, who will be the ninth generation on their family farm. Her family was the first to participate in the Calvert County Agricultural Preservation Program and they continue to support the

ideals and mechanics of farmland preservation today. She and her husband are full-time farmers, raising cattle, small grain, corn, soybeans, hay, and wheat on their 320 acre farm and rent 250 additional acres of local farmland. They also board 15 horses and have five Friesian mares which they breed. In addition to being a self-employed farmer, Susan was a co-founder and past director of the Calvert Farmland Trust and has served on a number of boards and committees. Susan serves on the MET easement committee.

Landowner Spotlight: Wanda & Rick Morton

The land conservation profession often revolves around statistics – number of acres protected, miles of shoreline preserved, value of development rights extinguished. At MET we try not to lose sight of the fact that behind every one of our easement properties is a landowner. And each landowner has a story to tell. Landowner Spotlight is a series that captures and shares those inspiring stories.



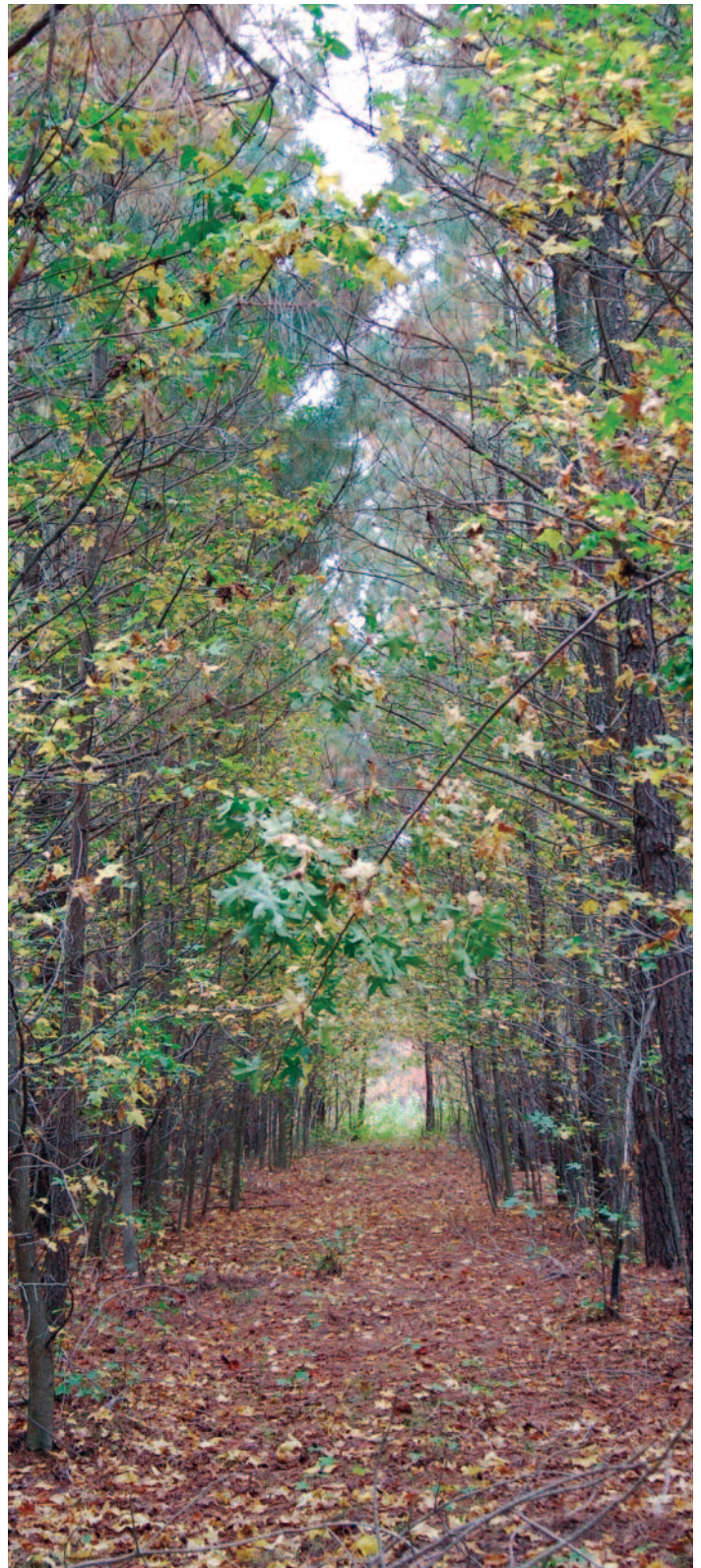
Thanks to Wanda and Rick Morton, 94 acres of woodlands on Presquile Road in Talbot are protected forever. In December of 2009 the Mortons donated a conservation easement on the property to MET and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC).

These woods will remain as they have for generations, providing habitat for wildlife and enjoyment for its owners and those traveling scenic Presquile Road.

Donating a conservation easement was an easy decision for the Mortons. These woods have special significance to Wanda. The property has been in the family since 1892. Wanda explored the woods as a child with her father and continues to do so with her husband. Her grandfather had a small sawmill in the woods which he used to harvest trees for the buildings on the nearby family farm. A small lot adjacent to the woods, now owned by the Mortons and protected by the easement, once held the Miles River School House. Wanda's mother and aunt attended the one room school house. The Mortons wanted to ensure the woodlands would be never be destroyed by development. A conservation easement was a good fit for the Mortons because of the strong family connections to the property and the outstanding wildlife habitat attributes of the land.

The woodlands are home to Delmarva fox squirrel, a state and federally listed endangered species as well as forest interior dwelling bird species. Populations of many of these bird species are declining in Maryland and throughout the eastern United States. The Mortons report seeing wild turkey and many deer in the woods. The property is adjacent to Pickering Creek Audubon Center, a sanctuary of the Chesapeake Audubon Society, and a large block of lands protected by MET conservation easements.

"We are proud of the conservation easement," said Wanda Morton, "and pleased to protect our property". The Mortons also own a farm in Caroline County that is protected by a conservation easement co-held by MET and ESLC.



Volunteer Monitoring

Maryland Environmental Trust has protected over 125,000 acres on over 1,000 properties statewide. MET is charged with monitoring and stewarding these properties in perpetuity. Our volunteer monitoring opportunities are a celebrated part of this process.

Regular inspections of protected lands offer MET an opportunity to observe changes and to communicate with landowners. Our volunteers provide “feet on the ground” monitoring assistance as our inventory of protected lands grows.

More than 25 volunteers have successfully been part of our Stewardship Program for the past seven years. As part of the eyes and ears of MET, our volunteers have the commitment and interest to conduct a thorough monitoring. When volunteers visit MET properties, they help address landowner questions—on invasive species, erosion control or buffer plantings—or refer queries to MET Staff.

The monitoring observations made by our volunteers enable the MET staff to allocate its stewardship resources efficiently. Our stewardship care enables the perpetual protection of the easement’s conservation values and open space for future generations. It is important to ensure that terms of the easement are upheld and violations can be addressed promptly.

Our dedicated and diligent volunteers have the opportunity to visit significant natural areas, farm and forest land, waterfronts, historic view sheds and scenic landscapes while ensuring that these places are protected.

If you are interested in volunteering for Maryland Environmental Trust, please contact Michelle Johnson at 410-514-7908 or by email at mjohnson@dnr.state.md.us.



Volunteers are trained to monitor easement properties.

MET Welcomes New Staff Member

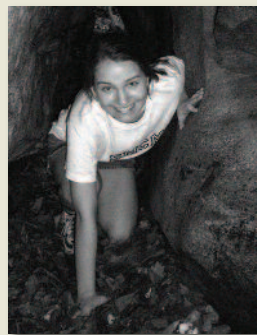


Michelle Johnson joined MET as the Volunteer Coordinator in May 2009. Michelle works with landowners and volunteers to monitor easement properties across the state. She conducts monitoring inspections and assembles the field files needed by volunteers, staff and local land trusts to inspect properties.

Michelle has participated in two trainings for local land trust and MET volunteers and is currently recruiting and organizing a spring volunteer training session. Michelle has also contributed to the management of MET’s electronic files. Michelle’s positive attitude and strong work ethic have been invaluable assets to MET in this past year.

College Intern Joins MET

Jamie Marie Haydel is a senior at St. Mary’s College of Maryland majoring in political science and environmental studies. MET is excited to have Jamie working as a conservation easement and stewardship program intern this semester. Jamie will be preparing



field files for monitoring volunteers, assisting staff on monitoring visits to the field, meeting with St. Mary’s County landowners and public officials and working on conservation easement outreach efforts in St. Mary’s County. After one month with MET, Jamie reports, “All in all I like working at MET. The people are extremely nice and helpful and I feel like I’m working

at an organization that is making a difference!”

MET Board Member Retires



David Greene retired in May 2009 after serving two consecutive terms as a board member and two years as an area representative. David has been active in the agriculture and preservation communities for many years. David and his wife Nancy operate a 100 ewe flock sheep farm in northern Baltimore County. The

one hundred acre farm has been in David’s family since 1786. David’s thoughtful presence will be missed at MET.



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Make a contribution to MET today!

To date, MET has protected over 125,000 acres on more than 1,000 easements across the state. MET has the long term responsibility for monitoring and stewarding these properties in perpetuity. Regular monitoring requires considerable resources and MET has established the Stewardship Fund to help offset expenses related to monitoring our easement properties. Your generous contribution to the Stewardship Fund will ensure that the conservation easements will be upheld into the future.

PLEASE MAIL YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS TO: The Maryland Environmental Trust, Attn: Stewardship Fund

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